



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contacts

Michael Sanchez
Utah Division of Water Resources
385-226-8967
masanchez@utah.gov

Drought Update

SALT LAKE CITY (Feb. 10, 2022) – After December storms helped snowpack rebound, a dry January left Utah with a stagnant snowpack. With 95% of Utah’s water supply coming from snowpack, we need above-average snowstorms to help refill reservoirs. Utah still has 54 days until the snowpack typically peaks.

“The rollercoaster ride continues,” said Brian Steed, executive director of the Department of Natural Resources. “Dry weather isn’t what we want. We need consistent snowstorms. These next two months will really determine what kind of spring runoff we will have.”

At-a-glance highlights (updated Feb. 10, 2022):

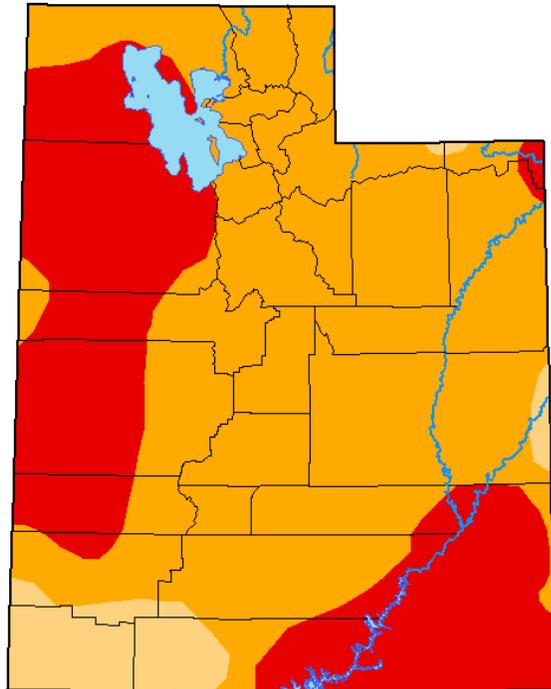
- 33.64% of Utah is in extreme drought, 93.77% of the state is in severe drought.
- Statewide snow water equivalent (SWE), or how much water would be in the snowpack if it melted, is 9 inches. This is 89% of median for this time of year and 57% of median peak, which usually occurs around the first of April.
- Thirty-two of Utah’s largest 45 reservoirs are below 55% of available capacity. Overall statewide storage is 53.6% of capacity. This time last year, reservoirs were about 64% of capacity.
- Soil moisture is nearly 9% above median for this time of year, which is much better than last year. Wet soils are critical to have effective spring runoff.
- Of the 63 measured streams, 39 are flowing below normal. Less gauges are measuring streamflow because of ice in the streams.

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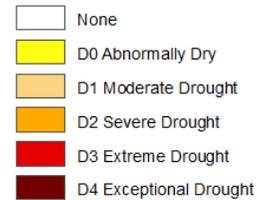


U.S. Drought Monitor Utah

February 8, 2022
(Released Thursday, Feb. 10, 2022)
Valid 7 a.m. EST



Intensity:



The Drought Monitor focuses on broad-scale conditions. Local conditions may vary. For more information on the Drought Monitor, go to <https://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/About.aspx>

Author:

Deborah Bathke
National Drought Mitigation Center



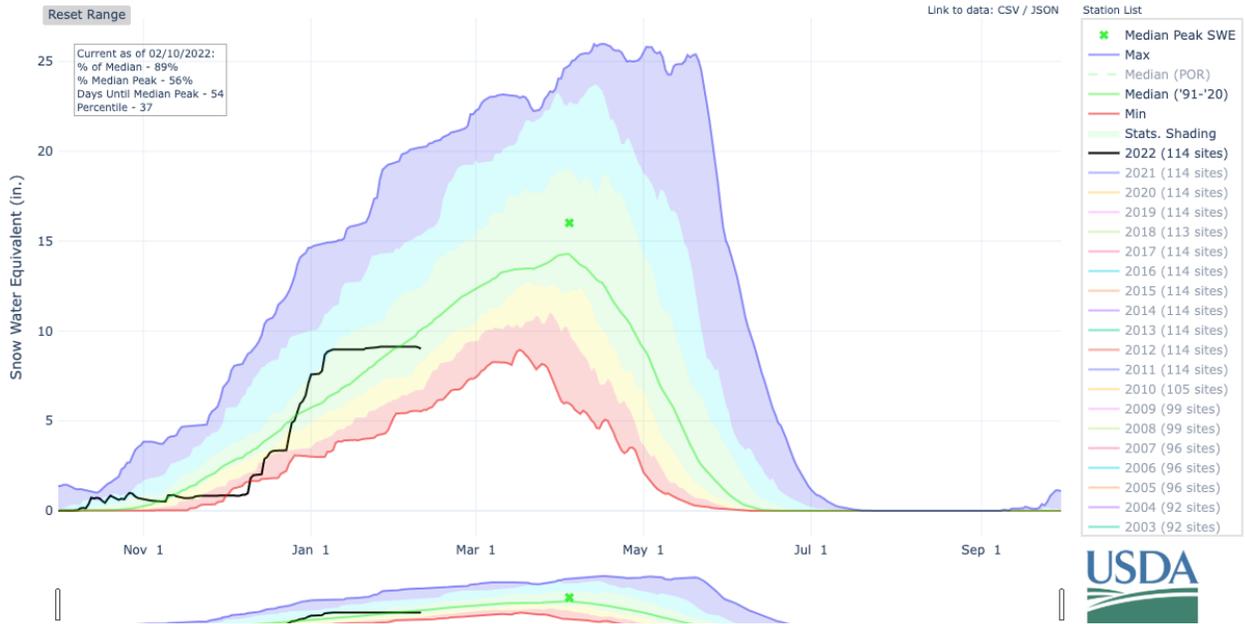
droughtmonitor.unl.edu

FULL REPORT

Precipitation and soil moisture

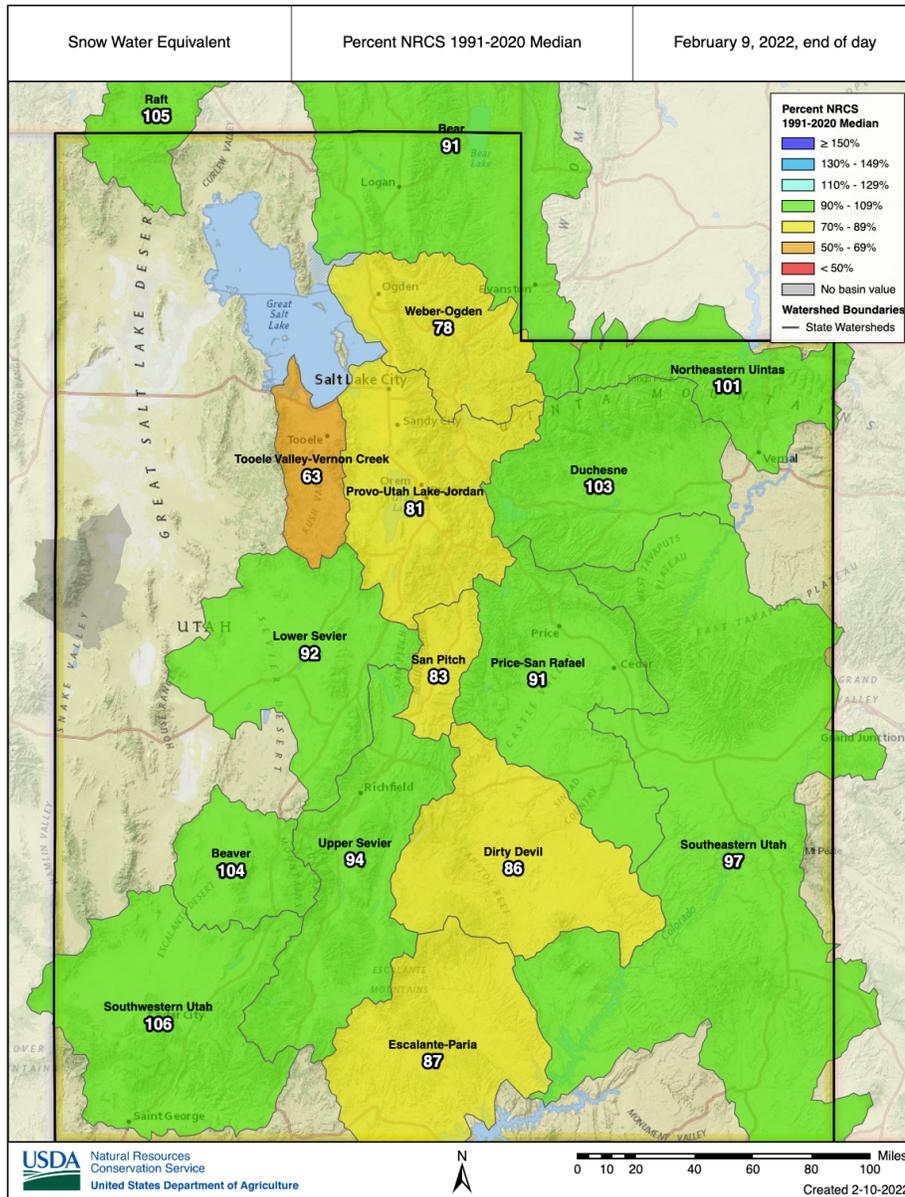
- Snow water equivalent (as measured at [NRCS SNOTEL](#) sites) on Feb. 10 is 9 inches. The median (typical) for this time of year is 10.1 inches. The median peak for the year is 16.0 inches around the first of April. Statewide, there is about 56% of the snow water equivalent we need to reach the median for the year. Since we started the year essentially in debt water-wise, a better-than-average water year is needed.

SNOW WATER EQUIVALENT IN STATE OF UTAH



Snow Water Equivalent has stayed around 9 inches since Jan. 9. Many more storms are needed to increase the snowpack so we have a strong spring runoff and refill reservoirs.

- Snowpack levels are currently at 78% of median or higher with the exception of Tooele Valley-Vernon Creek which is at 63% of median. We still have 54 days until snowpack typically peaks.
- During winter months, soil moisture remains mostly unchanged until temperatures warm and melt begins.



Graphic shows snow water equivalent based on regions. After recent storms, some regions accumulated more snow than others.

Temperature and Evaporation

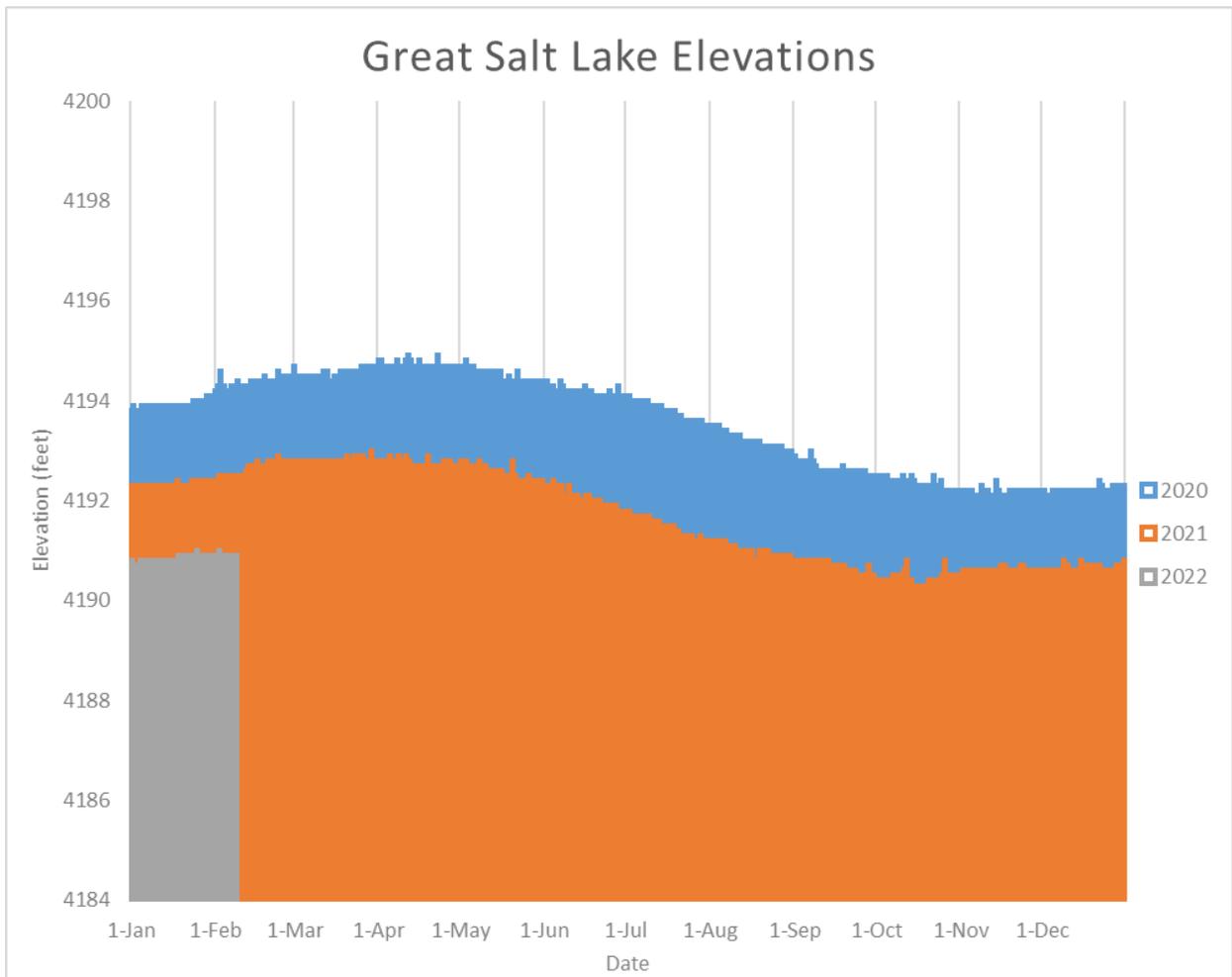
- Temperature has been .04 degrees below average for the last 30 days. Below-average temperatures can help the snowpack resist melting, encourage snow to fall, and decrease the demand of the air and land for water.

Streamflows

- Thirty-nine of Utah's 63 streams reporting data are flowing below normal. Many streams are affected by ice in colder months and don't report flows.
- Four streams had their seven day average flow reach record low.
- Daily flow from 39 headwater streams has been flowing below the median for this time of year.

Reservoir and Lake Levels

- Major reservoirs statewide are at 53.6% capacity. Withdrawals from reservoirs generally decrease over the fall and winter months. Snowpack is needed to refill the reservoirs in the spring prior to the higher use summer months.
- Thirty-two of Utah's 45 reservoirs are below 55% of available capacity.
- After dropping to 4190.2 feet, a new record low, on Oct. 18, Great Salt Lake's elevation is on the rise at 4190.9. Levels are expected to continue to rise through early spring until the irrigation season begins again. Inflow is needed to overcome the typical seasonal summer drop of about 2.3 feet.



This graph shows elevations of Great Salt Lake for the last three years.

Feb 1, 2022 | Surface Water Supply Index (SWSI)

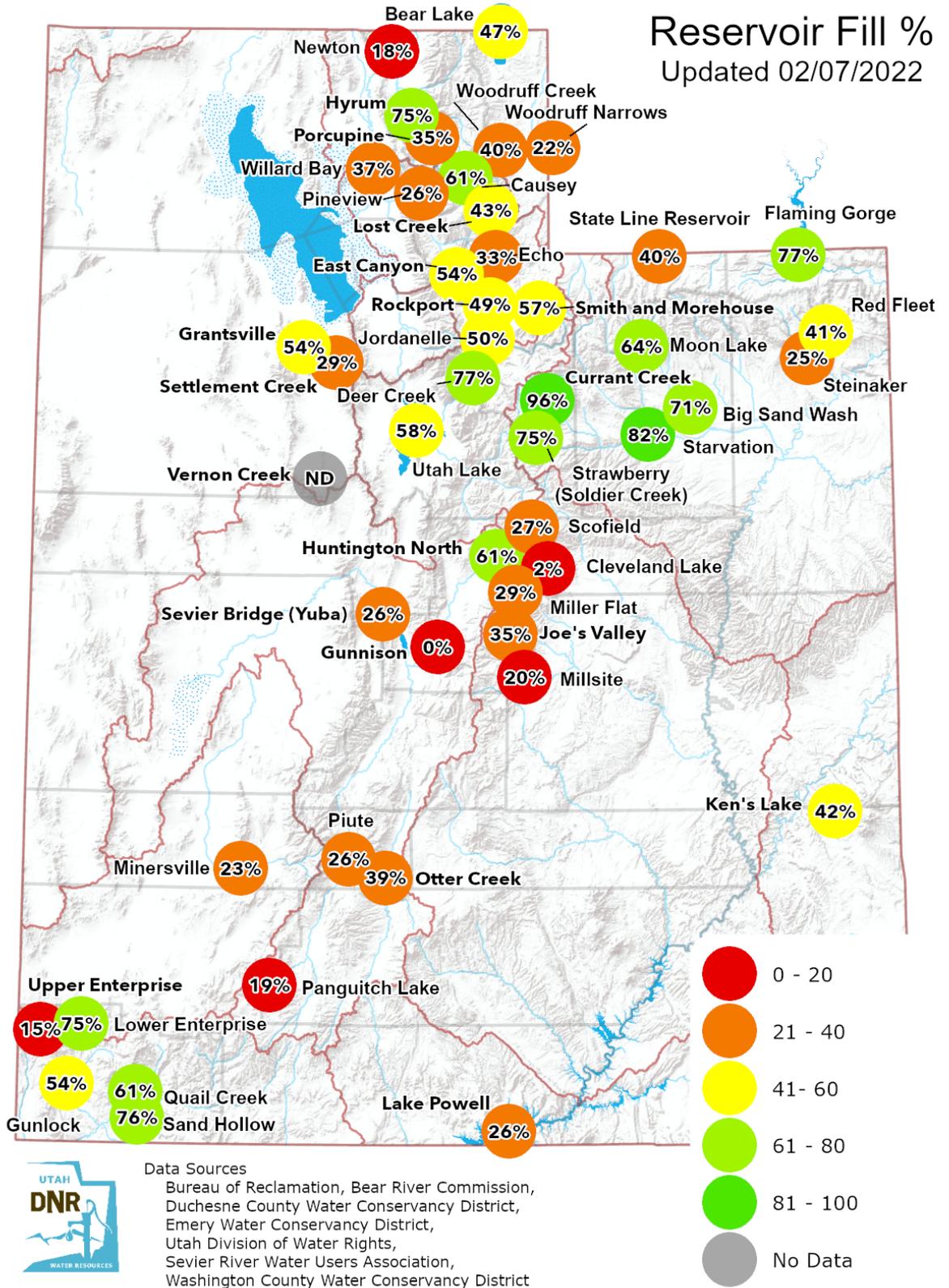
Basin or Region	Reservoir Storage ¹ (KAF) ²	Apr-July Forecast (KAF) ²	Forecast + Storage (KAF) ²	SWSI ³	Percentile ⁴ (%)	Similar Years
Bear	546.0	110.0	656.0	-0.48	44	[1989, 2014]
Woodruff Narrows	12.8	105.0	117.8	-0.68	42	[1981, 2007]
Little Bear	10.7	30.0	40.7	0.4	55	[2008, 2016]
Ogden	32.2	71.0	103.2	-2.03	26	[1990, 2002]
Weber	93.6	210.0	303.6	-3.59	7	[2015, 2021]
Provo	756.9	80.0	836.9	-3.3	10	[2003, 2016]
Western Uintas	155.9	105.0	260.9	1.26	65	[2006, 2016]
Eastern Uintas	19.8	52.5	72.3	-2.62	19	[1990, 2004]
Blacks Fork	10.5	81.0	91.5	-0.62	43	[2006, 2018]
Smiths Fork	5.5	26.0	31.5	1.04	62	[1985, 1997]
Price	17.8	32.0	49.8	-1.65	30	[1989, 1994]
Joes Valley	21.5	41.0	62.5	-3.2	12	[2002, 2003]
Ferron Creek	3.7	28.0	31.7	-2.03	26	[1989, 1992]
Moab	1.0	4.0	5.0	0.69	58	[1991, 1996]
Upper Sevier	37.9	32.8	70.7	-2.81	16	[1990, 1992]
San Pitch	0.0	13.8	13.8	-2.23	23	[1990, 2003]
Lower Sevier	55.4	36.0	91.4	-3.2	12	[2016, 2021]
Beaver River	5.4	22.0	27.4	-1.26	35	[2001, 2014]
Virgin River	29.3	46.0	75.3	-0.13	48	[2008, 2016]

¹ End of Month Reservoir Storage; ² KAF, Thousand Acre-Feet; ³ SWSI, Surface Water Supply Index; ⁴ Threshold for coloring: >75% Green, <25% Red

The Surface Water Supply Index (SWSI) is a predictive indicator of total surface water availability within a watershed for the spring and summer water use seasons.

Reservoir Fill %

Updated 02/07/2022



Data Sources

Bureau of Reclamation, Bear River Commission,
 Duchesne County Water Conservancy District,
 Emery Water Conservancy District,
 Utah Division of Water Rights,
 Sevier River Water Users Association,
 Washington County Water Conservancy District